

MOZART

Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550

Symphony No. 26 in E flat major, K. 184

Symphony No. 32 in G major, K. 318

Bamberg Symphony Orchestra · Fritz Lehmann



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Stereo transcription also playable mono

WOLFGANG
AMADEUS MOZART
(1756—1791)

SIDE A:

**Symphony No. 40
in G minor, K. 550**

1st movement: Allegro molto
2nd movement: Andante
3rd movement: Menuetto: Allegro
4th movement: Allegro assai

Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Eugen Jochum

SIDE B:

**Symphony No. 26
in E flat major, K. 184**

1st movement: Molto Presto
2nd movement: Andante
3rd movement: Allegro

**Symphony No. 32
in G major, K. 318**

1st movement: Allegro spiritoso
2nd movement: Andante

Bamberg Symphony Orchestra
Conductor: Fritz Lehmann

The Symphony in G minor, K. 550, is the central panel of the renowned symphonic triptych with which in the summer of 1788, three years before his death, Mozart concluded his work in the medium of the symphony. Possibly he wrote these three last Symphonies for performance at subscription concerts in Vienna during that summer (though if that is the case the concerts do not appear to have taken place), or possibly he wrote them merely to have them "in store", ready for concerts in the next winter season. Whatever the outward reason may have been, it is quite certainly a mistake to regard the overcast mood of the G minor Symphony as being a reflection in music of the period when the work was written—a time in Mozart's life particularly full of disappointments and anxieties—since the generally festive, happy Symphony in E flat, K. 543, and the victoriously jubilant "Jupiter" Symphony in C major, K. 551, were also written at that time.

The first movement (Allegro molto) begins, without any Introduction, with the principal subject, a restless melody which has been considered the expression of agonized lamentation, and therefore the motto of the whole G minor Symphony. If this interpretation is correct, the elements of grief and pain are expressed initially with restraint, just as the orchestral texture of the work is almost within the realm of chamber music; while Mozart later added the clarinets which were not in the original score, even the second version makes no use of percussion or high brass instruments—this is in every respect music "without drums and trumpets"! The second subject, which appears in B flat major, brings some relaxation; with its chromatically gliding phrases it has a sense of calm resignation about it.

The Development is only superficially "beautiful"; beneath the surface there is deep and menacing disquiet, the energetic first subject gaining the upper hand again and again. The end of the movement is sombre, offering no comfort.

The mood of the Andante is also overcast, despite the truly Mozartian grace of its lyrical theme. This theme, with its sense of inward melancholy, appears hesitantly and tenderly. No words could describe the growth and development, the poignant and delicate tremblings of this seemingly veiled thematic figure—this is the province of the receptive ear, and certainly also of the heart.

Wholly different, powerful and tense, is the third movement (Allegro). Although Mozart still described this as a "Minuet", it is—according to Kretzschmar—"one of the most challenging movements ever formed on the basis of the old, decorative dance form". Its "heroic-hopeless" mood is softened only temporarily by the milder episode of the Trio, whose character is established by the sound of the horns.

The finale (Allegro assai) is extremely energetic, impassioned, and almost diabolical in its ominous wildness. As in the first movement, the threateningly thunderous principal subject, whose opening Beethoven used in the Scherzo of his "Fate" Symphony, certainly by no mere chance, is contrasted by a calmer, chromatically coloured second subject. The Development is full of most powerful tensions, and is marked by bold modulations. The ending is sombre and brings no consolation—yet there is no collapse into chaos. The nocturnal darkness of this impassioned work in G minor is to be followed, as certainly as the dawn of a new day, by the radiant glory of the C major Symphony!

In 1773, when the seventeen-year-old Mozart was employed as leader of the orchestra at Salzburg, he wrote several symphonies, four of which consist of only three movements, and are still clearly marked by characteristics of the older Italian "overture". One of these is the Symphony in E flat major K. 184 which, like the other works in this group, is better described as an overture, and which Mozart actually used as such, when he employed it as prelude to the "heroic drama" by Tobias von Gebler "Thamos, King of Egypt".

Another work bearing the characteristics of an overture is the Symphony in G major, K. 318, which probably dates from April 1779. This piece, which also consists of three interlinked movements, is believed to have been written as Overture to the singspiel "Zaide", which remained unfinished. These two little Overtures described as "Symphonies" demonstrate, in their unproblematic way, Mozart's ability to forget the onerous nature of his duties at Salzburg immediately he set to work and found true happiness in artistic creation.



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ST 33

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
Symphony No. 40 in G minor KV 550

1st Movement: Allegro molto

2nd Movement: Andante

3rd Movement: Menuetto; Allegro

4th Movement: Allegro assai

Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra
Eugen Jochum, Conductor

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